

GROUNDWORK REPORT



Welcome to the Green Economy - WORK element

OUR BRIGHT FUTURE

1. Project overview / What we did

Groundwork London's Our Bright Future project consisted of three elements; **Window**; the schools engagement element aimed to give secondary pupils insight and raise awareness of the green economy. The **Welcome** element was match funded & delivered vocation training to NEET (not in employment, education or training) young people.

The third element, **Work** provided paid work opportunities in green economy roles to enable NEET young people to develop employability skills & experience through a supported work route-way. The project ran from 2016 to 2021, extended for a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The original aim was to do this through three key job industry areas based on current Groundwork London projects that could provide ring fenced placements but this evolved into a wider range of placements. Participants were supported throughout their placement by their Coach who recruited & prepared participants for placements as well as providing continued in-work support & progression coaching through their contracts.

To better enable participants to widen their understanding of the Green Economy, group exchange activities were trialled evolving into differently themed workshops. The process of coaching, employability support & workshops inspired the evolution of the visual CVs activity, created by participants to help them to communicate their experiences & the impact of their work.

Methodology / How we did it

During the 5 years of the programme, the methodology evolved in response to our experiences as well as to the changing socio/political environment of the employment sector. In addition the global pandemic (COVID-19) in year 5 brought unique challenges that inspired unique responses. There were four key elements of the programme.

A) Creating ring fenced opportunities

The work element of the project aimed to create job roles within the green economy for young people furthest from the labour market; those that were struggling to gain work due to lack of relevant, current references and work experience. Intermediate Labour Market contracts (ILMs) were used, the core feature of which is paid work on a temporary contract, together with training, coaching and job search activities.

The initial focus for job roles were in three project areas; reuse, domestic energy services and climate proofing urban landscapes, based on the assumption of available hosted roles within Groundwork London projects. Reuse referred to Rework (white goods upcycling & resell) & The Loops (furniture recycling/ upcycling workshops & shops), domestic energy services referred to the Green Doctor energy advisers & water saving customer engagement team & the climate proofing landscapes referenced our mobile gardening Green Teams.

In year 2, placement opportunities were significantly limited due to reduced delivery on key projects so we developed additional hosted opportunities in response to this. We later included some externally hosted placements to further diversify available roles.

B) Recruitment

A key element of the work element was the recruitment process; using site visits, work tasters & work trials rather than formal applications & interviews. This allowed hosts to judge suitability on what the participant could do, rather than how they presented on paper or first impression. It also gave the participants the opportunity to try out the placement to better understand what they were committing to whilst helping coaches get a better insight into any additional barriers the young person may be managing, rather than just what was declared in the initial needs assessment.

Opportunities were shared with a number of stakeholders including local authority employment programmes, community based services, youth projects, Jobcentre plus & other Groundwork programmes. Interested young people were not required to complete formal applications but asked to participate in meetings with the coach, attend site visits, undertake work tasters etc. This routeway provided better equality of access to ring fenced jobs using a non-competitive process, & not based on how the applicant presented on paper via application or at interview. This also allowed for self-screening; if the young person was not ready to make the move into work at that time, this would become apparent through the pathway. The process flagged up additional barriers not necessarily declared, for example lateness due to responsibilities such as taking a sibling to school or absence when required to translate for a parent.

C) In-work support & coaching

The most important aspect of the programme was the ongoing support provided by dedicated coaches who worked with participants from referral, through recruitment process & continuing in-work support until contract end, as well as beyond on some occasions. This developed relationships of trust & disclosure which aided progression. We experienced a number of occasions where it transpired that a young person was involved in the judicial situation, not declared at the start, either purposefully so as not to impact on their chances of work or because of avoidance or denial. In a number of cases character references were provided by the project in preparation for court cases & the coaches were essential in identifying & instigating where this was needed. The coaches supported participants with a range of additional challenges during their contracts including family & housing problems, pregnancy, domestic abuse, targeting by gangs, problematic drug use & so on. There were inevitably occasions where participants were not able to complete, & the team had to recognise that sometimes we meet young people at a time when they are not ready to make that progression & trust that the experiences they have gained will be useful when they are.

The coaching support method evolved over the programme. By the last two years there were two coaches with dedicated caseloads but working together to ensure back up support to each other, sharing ideas & experiences. Regular cohort meetings between the coaches & project manager explored key challenges & the challenges case study template was developed to document the more difficult learning experiences rather than just focusing on good news stories.

As well as the more extreme challenges & barriers, coaches were invaluable in supporting the young people to understand, adjust & learn practical work skills that a line manager might expect to be already known, such as the skill of getting to work on time, planning to have funds for travel, appropriate communication in the workplace & managing conflict.

LOCKDOWN DIARY

TRAINEE REFLECTIONS

<p>The positives are I am spending more time with my family and getting to know my parents</p> <p>The positives are I get to clean up my flat. I get to spend time with my mum.</p> <p>The positives are the fact that I'm getting used to it. It's not as bad as it was from the beginning</p> <p>Mentally I'm doing okay</p> <p>The good thing since Saturday he is start to feel better. We should be able to see him in a couple of days</p> <p>My brother is out of isolation and he's now with the rest of the family.</p>	<p>I am cooking more. Feeling good. I'm grateful that I've my health and strength. I would be happy going back to work as long they've considered our safety</p> <p>I'm just taking each day as it comes and its been okay.</p> <p>The ability to move back in and spend time with family - I have not had this much time with them since I officially moved out at 18!</p> <p>Plan out and budget more successfully as I have much less expenditures which means more money for savings!</p> <p>New type of work (buddying calls) that I'm immensely enjoying as it gives me an excuse for a chat and learn new insights into other cultures and upbringings!</p>	<p>I'm not enjoying quarantine I would rather be working as it gives me something to do. I'm going for walks sometimes but it's not the same. I can't wait to go back to work.</p> <p>It's doing my head in if I'm honest. staying at home has messed up my routine and when I should be taking my medicine for my epilepsy I haven't been out and exercising as much as I thought I would.</p> <p>I want to go back to work but I can't and there's nothing I can do about it.</p> <p>My brother has got the corona virus and he's self-isolating. We are doing our best to support him but I'm a bit worried about him. I would rather be working then staying at home. I am just waiting for the call to return</p> <p>My brother is still on isolating and we are not able to see him. At one point his condition got really bad whilst isolating.</p>	<p>It's a bit hard on the mind, some people who are going out a lot and breaking the rules, they are the reason why we're staying in this thing longer. That's annoying.</p> <p>Not knowing when we will be going back. Just want to know when we will be going back to work again.</p> <p>Restricted movement - Not being able to go out to parks to enjoy the sunshine, picnics and sneaked tinned cocktails!</p> <p>Having to move in with my family/boyfriend's family can have it's tough moments when you're so used to total independence!</p> <p>Lack of access to McDonald's... honestly a massive guilty pleasure haha, what happened to McDonalds Monopoly this year?!</p>
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Specific data around wellbeing wasn't collected; the focus was more on confidence & motivation which was recorded in reviews. During lockdown the coaches' contact with participants became much more focused on well-being for furloughed trainees as well as those having to adjust to remote working practice. During Covid-19 restrictions & lockdown the coaches encouraged participants to find some positives as well as challenges about their changed situation to encourage continued communication & reflection when stuck at home.

Exchange Days & shared learning

The aim of the exchange days was to bring together trainees to share their experiences & gain insight into others' placements in order to gain a broader awareness of green economy roles.

We explored different ways of delivering this over the course of the project. The ideal was that cohorts would participate in numerous sessions but due to the nature of the placements recruitment was on a roll on/ roll off basis so it was important to ensure that exchange days could have stand-alone value & reflected subjects that participants had identified as wanting to work on.

The workshop themes evolved into three key themes that linked to each other but also worked as stand-alone sessions for participants not attending all of them.

Workshop 1: Communication. Session includes exploring different types of communication that we experience.

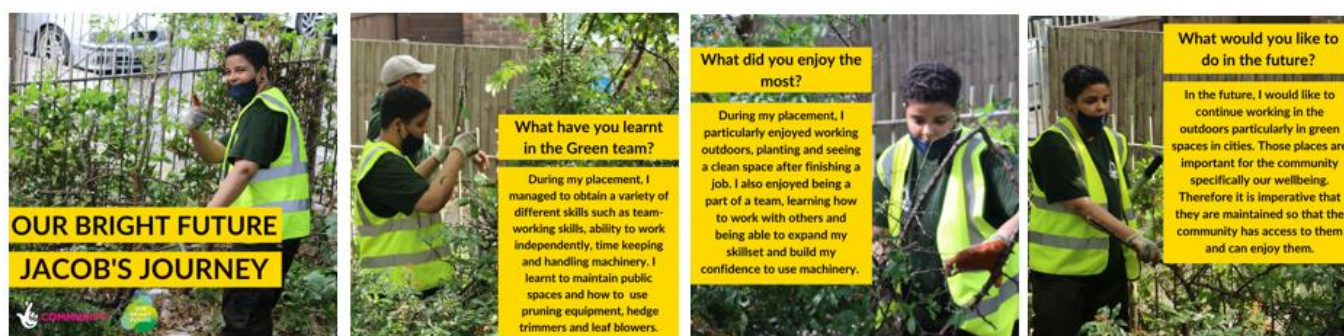
Workshop 2: Self-Empowerment. Session includes reviewing personal progress & development.

Workshop 3: Impact. The last session looks at wider impact of the work undertaken, the benefit the young people's work has on the wider community

D) vCVs (Visual CVs)

The idea of the visual CV or vCV was developed in response to participant progression preparation when participants started applying for post ILM work. Trainees struggled to talk about the skills & experiences they had gained during their contracts, lacked the confidence to sell their skills in a way expected in applications & interviews. Due to limited job market experience trainees often found it difficult to reflect on the work they had undertaken & the skills they had developed. We played with the idea of a portfolio type tool, especially for those working in roles with tangible before & after tasks, such as gardening or furniture upcycling & arrived at the idea of a visual CV tool that all participants could create which would be a resource to help them reflect & promote their experiences to a prospective employer.

The medium for this could be versatile & during the project we had participants that created a short video, an illustration, social media Instagram story as well as a document with images & explanatory text. We put together simple questions to provide some inspiration to the text & our Comms colleagues participated closely with trainees, showing them how to use desktop publishing software & feeding back about templates, layouts, adding images & typefaces.



Jacob's Instagram vCv

2. Strengths

The tailored & evolving approach of the programme was a key strength. Our grant manager was encouraging of our changing & improving delivery based on learning & the flexibility of the grant allowed us to respond to the changing needs & challenges we experienced. With the ILM placements we were able to impact on Groundwork London's recruitment process & increase diversity with a number of trainees remaining with the trust post their ILM contracts. At time of completion we still have six programme alumni that continue to be part of our staff team.

Changing the coaching model to allow for more direct support was beneficial; it was a strength for the coaches to have a relatively small caseload. Having the time to visit participants on site, & on occasions, staying with them through the day to gain better insight into their role was really helpful & developed better relationships with the site hosts as well as trainees.

3. Challenges / learning

Recruitment: Recruitment was a significant challenge, even with formal application processes being removed. The remit was to create & fill placements for harder to reach NEET young people, those less likely to be actively applying for work & unlikely to get through the competitive process of apprenticeship applications. We knew that our young people engaged reporting didn't reflect the much higher referral & contact numbers we had through the coaches outreach work & from 2019 we started to record stats of numbers referred, engaged, met, progressing through recruitment pathway & actually starting ILM to get a better idea of the dropout rate.

Using stats from a three year period we saw that only 20% of young people progressed from referral to placement start but the biggest drop out was between initial referral, meet & follow up where we would lose 50%. Once a young person committed to a work taster they were over 70% likely to progress to starting the job.

% young people recruitment progression

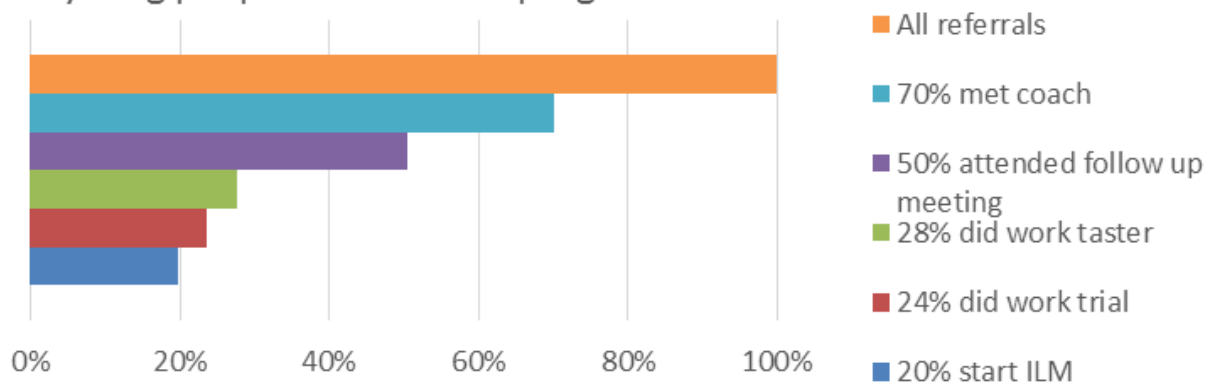


Figure 1) Chart showing percentage of young people progressing through each stage of recruitment pathway

We tried different methods of programme promotion to encourage referrals & arrived at a quarterly newsletter format which gave an overview of activities over the last three months, examples of current trainee activities, live vacancy details & one legacy piece; a key highlight from that quarter. This was often a mini good news story showcasing a positive achievement by a programme participant.

These newsletters were multi-use, part of our reporting but also to promote the programme & advertise opportunities.

A standardised template was constructed with Comms colleagues so that we could provide content & know they could create the document quickly.

Winter 2019

WORK IN THE GREEN ECONOMY

WELCOME:

As we come to the end of our fourth year we want to take this opportunity to reflect on some success stories from our young people who have demonstrated incredible resilience to create positive change around London. This quarter we have created some interesting work opportunities in places such as Bee Urban, which is a bee keeping social enterprise based in London. There have also been opportunities with Groundwork's Green Doctors, dedicated to helping families across London to keep warm and save money. Finally, we have created placements with Silver Active, a community project that helps reduce social isolation for the over fifty fives in north London. We have got our amazing young people in on the action and they are making a difference in the lives of people who really need it.

So what is an Our Bright Future placement?

- A six month job contract in a Green Economy role
- For young people aged 16-24 not in work or education
- Contract is paid at standard National Minimum Wage
- 25 hours a week
- Job roles are created for young people with limited or no work experience

As an Achievement Coach it has been a privilege to be working along-side the young people and watch them grow in both skills and confidence.

Charlie Toko

OWNING IT:



Hanzalah – Reuse Assistant at the Loop

"I have learnt a lot of new skills in carpentry and painting. I enjoy transforming old furniture into something completely new. I have also grown in my customer service skills. And I have now started recycling at home."



Sequin – Circle Refugee Project Assistant

"I am learning how to get around in the workplace which has built up my confidence. I work on a refugee project where we do gardening and art activities. One day we made sun-catches with leaves. It was therapeutic and brought the community together."

THE OBF LEGACY



Aliyah

Aliyah was recruited as a project assistant on the Circle project, which focuses on refugee integration. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, she completed a recruitment routeway via Zoom, little realising her whole OBF contract would be done remotely.

Aliyah says, 'I learnt how to facilitate and deliver participant workshops, conduct outreach to promote the Circle project

and prepare session plans and materials. I developed my organisational, administration and time management skills. Additionally, I gained experience working with a vulnerable group - refugees, and now better understand how to support the refugee community. I'm more aware of the challenges refugees face when they first come to England, and that the support offered needs to be specific and tailored to the participant's individual needs.

'My journey with OBF and Groundwork has been amazing, especially due to my colleagues and managers who supported me through the placement. I learnt a lot just by talking to my colleagues about their roles and always had someone to rely on when I had questions.' Towards the end of her contract a vacancy came up within the Community team at Groundwork & Aliyah successfully applied for it, 'To participate in the OBF placement and end up getting a job straight after is amazing. I couldn't have asked for a better outcome!'

Placement host challenges: Working in partnership with our placement hosts, internal & external, brought its own challenges. One of which was the hosts' approach to dealing with difficult behaviour. Rather than intolerance towards unprofessional behaviour, we found it more common for hosts to be overly understanding & forgiving, not updating coaches on occasions of lateness or non-attendance in the belief they were giving the young person a chance to improve. There were a couple of occasions where the host didn't share concerns until at a point of considering stopping the placement altogether.

Coaches often took on an advocacy role, at the request of either party to resolve conflict & were frequently requested to sit in on performance meetings. It was common for coaches to be navigating the differing reports from the young person & employer to support with finding common ground to move forward & encouraging everyone to agree to change behaviour. Whilst we had many supportive & patient hosts, there were a couple of occasions where we decided not to place further trainees in placements. Reasons included unrealistic host expectations, issues with communication & lack of updates to coaches.

Documenting common challenges: OBF required quarterly good news stories which were a great way of showcasing some of the fantastic trainee achievements but we knew this didn't capture the whole story or document the learning & insight we gained. In response to this the coaches developed 'challenges' case study templates. The aim was to capture some of the learning from common or reoccurring challenges & reflect on what we could have done differently.

Some key areas were identified, in particular negative external influences from unlikely sources, including parents or girlfriend/ boyfriends, the importance of listening to instinct when things feel

wrong, (although the issue could be completely different from what was expected) & the detrimental impact of not drawing attention to problematic behaviour as soon as it was identified.

Challenges case study extracts

BA. Female, aged 20: *There had been concerns at the beginning of her placement that there was something going on with BA's finances; her outgoing didn't make sense, for example she was living in a hostel but had a new car. She had a key worker as well as her JCP Work coach actively supporting which would usually mean her benefit situation would be well supported so the concern was she had an additional & problematic income from somewhere.*

When it looked as though her job would end things escalated & with further digging the coach discovered that BA was still receiving benefits & was dependent on both benefits & salary to pay her outgoings, but wasn't paying the service fee on her hostel room. BA was adamant that she had told her key worker & Work coach about the job so it wasn't her responsibility if her benefits hadn't been stopped. Her actions were increasing her debts & making her more vulnerable. She presented herself very confidently but she had a naivety & lack of confidence that could open her up to manipulation.

What makes this story relevant *is as an example of how a coach's instinct is so important to acknowledge. The coach knew something was amiss but it took a while for the whole story to come out. It showed the importance of not making assumptions about support in place; just because a young person has statutory services involved it's still possible that things slip through the gaps. The coach felt something was wrong but thought there were indicators of coercion & involvement with criminal activities because of her vulnerability. It was an important lesson in making sure to ask the right questions, even if this makes for an uncomfortable conversation & that it is better that support overlaps rather than risking a gap*

RB, male aged 17: *RB found out about the placement at the Loop from his mum who also volunteered there. Prior to this he had dropped out of college & hadn't been doing anything. RB was very happy to start his placement as was familiar with the setting, it was local & after doing a work trial he felt comfortable working within the team.*

His role was as a Junior Workshop Assistant & he was learning carpentry and handyman skills. He enjoyed this which encouraged him to start looking into apprenticeships. His coach set up a meeting to apply for a plumbing traineeship but RB failed to attend. His coach later realised his reliability was a bigger issue & from early on it was rare that RB would be at work for a nine o'clock start even though he lived so close. His line manager didn't raise it with the coach, & kept giving chances for RB to make improvements. When he was in work he was very keen to learn but once the issue was raised the coach set up a meeting to issue a verbal warning to ensure that RB was clear how serious it was. The review was focused on RB's punctuality and attendance but included his falsifying his timesheet, saying he attended training when he gone to visit his girlfriend in Liverpool.

When confronted RB was remorseful and accepted responsibility, promising to make an immediate improvement on his attendance and punctuality. It was made clear that further issues would lead to a written disciplinary and RB promised that he would do better and follow the expected working procedures however, he failed to attend his next expected day at work & did not return.

What makes this story relevant *is as an illustration of how a well-meaning host may not keep the coach completely informed where there are early signs of unreliability, thinking they are giving the young*

person a chance. This case study also draws attention to the importance of being aware of external influencers and addressing this with the young person. These influencers could be a friend, a partner, or family & in this case Mum had been unable to assert authority to discourage RB from prioritising his relationship with his girlfriend over college & then work. The coach initially thought RB's mum didn't take his job seriously or was resigned to his actions although actually she was really concerned about the influence of the girlfriend and her family on her son. It is unknown if the coach had been better informed earlier if this could have impacted on RB's situation but it was frustrating that there wasn't the chance to do this.

4. Changing approach

There were a few key changes,

Diversifying the work placements. There were significant changes to projects hosting placements between year one & two which alerted us to the danger of relying too much on limited hosts. Widening our approach & engaging with more hosts had the benefit not just of spreading the risk but it also provided a wider range of roles & experiences. This was quite time consuming; promoting the programme, engaging with potential placements & carrying out checking & prepping processes & it often didn't result in viable placements. We concentrated on not for profit settings & coaches would often get good initial responses from managers but things would go quiet when approval was sought from HR or senior management.

Changing coaching model. Initially the project sat within other Groundwork London employment programmes & participants were supported by Employment Advisers in their geographical area who were also managing wider caseloads. We changed this after the first year in recognition of the level of support required to have a project focused coach, & this was later increased from one to two coaches. This allowed greater flexibility for outreach & visits to trainees in their placements, plus having two coaches gave us back up as well as the option to transfer young people when it was felt this would be beneficial to encourage their positive engagement.

Trainee exchange days. The initial plan was for placement hosts to facilitate group visits for cohorts of trainees, with the resident trainee participating in leading the visit but this proved problematic for many hosts to accommodate & received mixed reception & engagement from trainees.

The next version was workshops led by our training manager which focused on the Green Economy jobs market, the first of which was based on energy saving - an area particularly relevant to some of the participants as it related directly to their placements. This again had mixed reception in terms of engagement. The classroom feel did not work well with some trainees, particularly those that had negative education experiences or struggled in focused environments.

This led to what we thought would be the final exchange day version where the focus was on bringing the young people together outside of their workplaces, exploring development areas based around key employability skills planned & led by the coaches. Through delivery this developed into three focused workshops that responded to learning areas identified as relevant by participants & line managers; communication skills & how to present experience for the jobs market. The third area was inspired by the Our Bright Future wider project aim looking at impact.



Participant exchange workshop 3 with coaches, Sarah & Charlie centre front. Feb 2020

The last evolution of the exchange days was as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown. At this point in the project life, the goal had been to deliver the evolved versions of the three workshops to the current cohort. However, like the rest of the world we took the workshops online which required more adjustments & presented a new set of challenges including technical inclusion. These proved to be really fun experiences & surprisingly, got universally positive feedback from the mixed ability group, perhaps because of the isolation we were all experiencing we appreciated it that much more.

Covid-19 & remote working. Moving to remote working following the Covid-19 lockdown proved a unique challenge for the delivery team & participants, also for those that had placements paused during furlough which had a big impact on their experience.

During this period & despite the best attempts of the coaches we saw a decrease in young people's engagement over the last month or so of their placements, not completing some last tasks or engaging with active job search activities towards the end of their contracts. It isn't uncommon for some young people to begin to detach towards the end as they start to realise they will be finishing soon but this is much easier to manage if the coaches can work with the young person face to face.

5. Outputs

175 young people will have increased skills and the work experience necessary to gain work in the green economy, of whom: 68% will complete the placement and 42% will progress into employment

We missed this 'Welcome' strand profile by 9, reporting 166 but of those that have been reported 77% (122) completed & 45% (75) progressed into employment. So, whilst being 5% short of profile we exceeded completion & progression in terms of percentage & actual numbers.

The main challenge with this outcome has been that as our match funded element, the project had limited control over delivery. Over the project life there were changes & pauses with vocational funding & we had restricted influence over this. Management of delivery has also moved within the Trust which impacted on timely sharing of updates & opportunities at times.

The stand out challenge was the Covid-19 pandemic. When training moved online it had a significant negative impact on engagement numbers & for the more practical areas such as green skills & upcycling, those young people that would usually engage because training was hands-on & practical did not sign up.

127 new jobs will be created and ring-fenced for vulnerable young people unlikely to move directly into employment in mainstream green economy

We achieved 106% of this outcome in terms of creating & filling ring-fenced supported employment opportunities for young people, with 42% progressing into employment after their ILM.

Delivery was not equally divided across the six years; based on an average of 22 placement starts per year, year one was almost twice this & year 2 less than half. Recognising the challenges in placement availability as well as with recruitment that we experienced in year 2, we made changes in sourcing placements & coaching model which led to the following two years being much steadier.

6. Outcomes

- Young people have increased awareness of career pathways within the Green sector
- Young people are empowered about a range of environmental issues
- Young people have increased knowledge and understanding of individual impact on the environment

To assess these outcomes we included the questions in the exit reviews which were completed with as many participants as possible. As well as asking the trainee to reflect on their progress with regards to employment skills such as attendance, time keeping & confidence to complete tasks it also asked questions focusing on these outcomes. Extracts from trainee exit reviews as follows:

1. How do you think the sector you have been working in is making a difference to the environment

Cleared space for the communities

The (team) helps make refugees feel connected to their communities and engage with their environment. By delivery session that focuses on environmental issues. The workshop shows them how they can get involved in their local communities, i.e. visiting local parks and libraries.

I have a better understanding of how important this can be, and how it can improve the lives of other people around the community.

It has made an improvement to the local people by teaching them about gardening, looking after the nature such as making bird feeders, and learning about recycling.

I understand how it helps the community & their environment a lot more because I didn't know anything about this before. Now I know its really important to have green spaces in the city because it's good for peoples wellbeing.

Bringing people together, people buying local honey, and being around nature in whilst in the city.

Helping reduce fly tipping, cleaning up places, teaching and learning new skills so people can repair own furniture at home. Working with people from disadvantaged backgrounds – great to be teaching new skills of how to upcycle, Composting

We're aiming towards a better green economy by adding new trees & etc which has an impact

Making Estate's greener by gardening and planting shrubs etc – this helps to create a more positive atmosphere. It also helped more people in the community learn about the environment by directly working with plants/ soil etc.

2. Has working in this role changed your opinion about environmental issues? If yes, how?

Yes, taken the environment more seriously, decided to recycle

It has showed me how important it is to be connected to your environment and how that can improve your mental health.

It can improve the lives of the elderly

I have a better understanding and I'm more aware of the environmental impact on what we do.

Re-use furniture, recycle & look after your environment

A good understanding of recycling

I understand our role in helping to combat climate change by limiting the use of plastic and using cardboard instead. Also being conscience of how we recycle.

Always had an idea of how to avoid my impact. Learnt a lot of info about food waste & composting for family. 1/3 of our food is wasted in the UK, Not every borough has food caddies.

I understand that now instead of fly tipping or littering it is better to recycle

It's really important to have access to green spaces especially in the City because a lot of people don't have gardens so this is kind of work is vital.

I have learned more about communities and the different issues communities face. I also now understand how people can come together to resolve these issues by sharing their knowledge or experience.

I can help the environment by being a bit more healthy like walking instead of taking public transport which uses fuel that pollutes the air

The importance of not littering since having to prune the bushes

It helped me learn where to prioritise my efforts in trying to reduce the waste I produce

The only thing my job has taught me is how important nature is and that respect it.

Composting and recycling my own waste. Buying less packaged items / less plastic packaging. Not over buying – finish things first

I have learnt that I can alone be able to make some difference to help create a clean and healthy environment

No in sense of we only have a small impact in one area of London. But Yes in that we have a wider impact overall within London, because we have less fly tipping than we previously had in the area

In the office there are different bins that are used for food waste, recycled things, and other waste – I learnt about the importance of separating waste when throwing it away in order to help the environment. I learnt that using too much energy isn't good for the environment. I learned that even me making small changes at home can have a positive impact – for example, I try and remember to turn off the lights when I leave the room now, and when I brush my teeth I turn off the tap (these are all things that we share with people at Green Doctors events). I have shared this information with my family at home now – so I hope that sharing tips like this can have a bigger positive impact if more people try and save energy.

Through working with participants and hearing their feedback I realised how important engaging with nature and activities like gardening can be on people's mental health and on bringing people together.

Yes, I have learned that I can start up with my own carbon footprint, I now drive less than I used to. I recycle a lot at home and I have shared this with my family.

Like growing your own plants, the green doctors saving energy

3. What do you understand about the 'Green Economy'

Maintaining & preserving the environment for generations

It's given a better understanding of project managing, fund raising, and the important role a landscape architect plays in improving community spaces.

I have learnt that there are a lot of different job positions within the industry, such as tree surgeon or the likes.

Through my job I was able to research about other environmental focused organisations and learn how they deliver their programmes.

Opportunities to reduce or prevent fly tipping

I understand more about delivery roles, e.g. energy efficient consultants.

I understand different job roles, soft landscaping & hard landscaping

I am now working in the Green Economy full time so I understand lots more

I understand that furniture can be recycled instead of fly tipping

I am more aware about sustainability roles and conservation as job opportunities

My understanding has improved. I know a bit more about the different jobs that are out there.

That the green economy is more than just about being healthy & look after the flowers. There are many other job roles & responsibility

It helped me learn the ins & outs of the green economy, by allowing me to get first-hand experience

I now know what I want to do in the near future, which is to work as a gardener

Better understanding of career opportunities within the charity sector. I can see that business roles are advertising and showing an interest in tackling environmental issues

I now understand in a bit more depth how many opportunities there are out there

It has helped me to learn about the type of jobs that exist out there in the Green economy

which I didn't have that much knowledge of before till I started working

Prevent Fly tipping, reduce landfill, chemical waste impact. Recycling furniture means people buy less new furniture and less discarded waste


I used to think that the only jobs that worked on the environment were things like being a gardener – but now I realise there are many more jobs that are involved in the environment. For example, I didn't know

there was a job like being a Green Doctor and now I realise there are jobs that work to improve the environment in many different ways.

Before this role I didn't realise that people could work in this area – I thought it would all be voluntary or hobbies but now I understand there are many jobs in this field and I have ended up looking for jobs in the environmental sector too!

Raised awareness & see first-hand green jobs


THE OBF LEGACY



Keanu

Keanu continued working at The Loop after his 2019 OBF placement. He is now moving on, having successfully applied for an apprenticeship.

"The OBF program boosted my confidence and helped with a lot of my social issues. Jobwise, the program allowed me to try new things, and I received a lot of help from staff who gave me the confidence to get a new job. I have just gotten a new job as a gas engineer apprentice, which is different from what I'm used to, but I'm looking forward to challenging myself and learning new skills to develop my career."



Andres

"This opportunity has been one of the most rewarding and satisfying jobs that I've had. I was able to improve my interpersonal and management skills, I met amazing people and helped others.

Another Groundwork opportunity came up and I was offered a temporary position in the HR department as I am going back to Uni this coming September.

I feel so proud of myself for what I have managed to achieve during this time and I feel very optimistic for the future and the opportunities that are about to come."

Confidence & Personal development

Participants on the Work element completed an Initial Needs Assessment as part of their pre-placement engagement & this included a self-review where they marked their employability skills, such as time keeping, motivation to complete tasks & confidence to learn new things. The idea was that with a mid-way & exit review, these scores could be reviewed against the first review baseline to demonstrate progress.

In many cases not all three baseline, midway & exit reviews were completed due to trainee absence, not sustaining their placement etc so did not provide consistent data to create comparative stats.

Although not providing sufficient quantitative statistics on soft skill progressions, reviews were very useful as a coaching tool on an individual basis, allowing the coach to encourage the trainee to compare their performance throughout their placement, whether this was to help them to recognise their progress or to see issues that were arising.

Inputting a selection of review self-scoring one factor illustrated was that in many cases, rather than young people recording their progression in an improving linear fashion, often the baseline scores were very high, the midway quite low & the exit somewhere between the two. We

realised that this was mainly due to two aspects; first that at the start of engagement the young person may oversell themselves to get the placement offer &/ or have an unrealistic belief in their work readiness. The low midway score reflected their better understanding of work expectations & how tough adjusting to work really was so we recognised this pattern reflecting quite a positive insight.

An example extraction is included below.

Excellent	Improved	Satisfactory	Requires a little improvement	Requires lots of improvement
5	4	3	2	1

A lot				A little	
5	4	3	2	1	

1	Attendance
2	Timekeeping
3	Communication
4	Ability to follow instructions
5	Team working skills
6	Ability to adjust to new tasks
7	Ability to complete tasks
8	Self motivation to complete tasks
9	Confidence in your job
10	Confidence to move on to next work

11	How much do you think the work you are doing makes a difference to the environment?
12	Has working in this role changed your opinion about environmental issues?
13	What much do you understand about what 'The Green Economy' is?

A	How do you think the work you did benefited you personally?
B	What did you like most about your ILM experience?
C	Do you have any suggestions on ways to improve the OBF programme?

Participant	Questions	Questions 1-13													Progress Score		Employability Score	Task development	Confidence score	Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13						
Nawaal	Baseline	5	3	3	5	5	3	5	3	5	5									0
	Midway																			0
	Exit	4	4	2	5	4	4	3	3	2	3									-8
	Difference	-1	1	-1	0	-1	1	-2	0	-3	-2	0	0	0	0					0
Anna	Baseline	5	5	2.5	5	5	2	5	5	3	2									1.5
	Midway	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	0									0
	Exit	5	5	4	4	3.5	3.5	3	5	4	4									1.5
	Difference	0	0	1.5	-1	-1.5	1.5	-2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0					0
Kamile	Baseline	5	5	4	5	5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	3									2.5
	Midway	5	5	4.5	5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4.5	5									1
	Exit	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5										3.5
	Difference	0	0	1	0	0	0.5	0	-0.5	0.5	2	0	0	0	0					0
Samir	Baseline																			0
	Midway	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3									-5
	Exit	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3									0
	Difference	-2	-1	0	-1	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					0
Seb	Baseline	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4									0
	Midway																			0
	Exit	5	2	2	2	5	4	3	2	4	3									-14
	Difference	0	-2	-3	-3	0	-1	-1	-3	0	-1	0	0	0	0					0
Trushal	Baseline	5	5	0	5	5	5	5	5	4	4									4
	Midway	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	5										4
	Exit	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4									6
	Difference	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0					0
Aisha	Baseline																			0
	Midway																			0
	Exit	5	3	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	4									-6
	Difference	0	-2	-1	0	-1	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					0
Jacob	Baseline																			0
	Midway	5	2	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	3									-2
	Exit	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	2									0
	Difference	0	2	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	0	1	-1	0	0	0	0					0

7. Added Value

One area of the project we were unable to fully participate with was the youth forum. Of the three strands only the Work element engaged young people for a long enough period to promote engaging with the forum but an initial requirement was the young person had to commit to participation for a year. With placements limited to 6 months this was problematic but more so we found, adjusting to work & managing the changes & expectations that this brought, made it unrealistic for our participants to be able to commit more time to other project activities.

OUR BRIGHT FUTURE

WORKSHOPS E-BOOK COMPANION



As part of the Our Bright Future project, young people all over London have collaborated in Groundwork London workshops, discussing and sharing their struggles on finding work and improving the way they present themselves to employers.

Key themes were taken from these discussions and a Resource Book was created. Made for young people by young people.

WHO AM I?
Don't worry, I'm not a robot. Hello I'm May, a young person in a similar position you may be in right now: looking for experience to find the 'right' job for you. Or, already building up some experience but not quite sure what to do with it...so, now what? This is what this book was created to help with.

In this book you will find workshops and tasks, all designed to get us ready for heading into the professional working world. It follows the themes of:

- Finding effective ways of communicating who you are.
- Presenting your key skills through self-empowerment.
- Recognising and presenting the positive impact you make.

The Final Challenge:
To create a visual CV (vCV) - a standout, impactful and inspiring piece of work showing employers **Who You Are, What You've Done and The Impact You Make.**

This is My Bright Future...and it's yours too!

E-BOOK CONTENT



1. Introduction
2. How To Use This Pack
3. Activity Content
4. Workshop Overview:
 - Workshop 1: Communication
 - Workshop 2: Self-Empowerment
 - Workshop 3: Impact
5. Final Activity: Visual CV
6. Summary & Acknowledgements

HOW TO USE THIS PACK



This pack has been designed for young people (age 16-24) in groups of 4 - 12 participants. It contains 3 themed workshops, complete with its own session plan, worksheets, and reflections log.

The three main workshops together create a guide on how to complete the final activity, a 'visual CV'.

We suggest that each workshop be completed in one day as part of a package of 3, but each one can be used as a standalone activity.

The workshop reflection log has questions for the end of the session. There are 3 entries, one for each workshop, but a copy is saved in each workshop 'bundle' in case only one workshop is used.

Differentiation of Learning
Sessions may be differentiated depending on size of group, age of participants & any particular learning needs for example when breaking into groups, ensuring they are mixed levels, allowing more time or taking out one of the sessions.

Parts of the workshop can be shorter to better support participants that have challenges with prolonged concentration. When delivered online it is a good idea to reduce the workshop to half day with shorter breaks.

ACTIVITY CONTENT



Workshop 1 - Communication

Contains:

- W1 Session plan including suggested icebreaker & warm up activities.
- W1.1 Activity Worksheet: The Big Picture
- W1.1 Resource Slides
- W1.2 Activity Worksheet: The seven deadly sins of speaking.
- W1.3 Task Worksheet: Your Portrait, Your Brand.
- Workshop Reflections Log.

Workshop 2 - Self-Empowerment

Contains:

- W2 Session plan including suggested icebreaker & warm up activities.
- W2.1 Activity Worksheet: Job Ready
- W2.2 Activity Worksheet: Employer's Expectations
- W2.3 Task Worksheet: Tell Us About Yourself
- Workshop Reflections Log.

Workshop 3 - Impact

Contains:

- W3 Session plan including suggested icebreaker & warm up activities.
- W3.1 Activity Worksheet: Small Acts of Kindness.
- W3.2 Activity Worksheet: Exploring Influence & Impact.
- W3.2 Resource slides
- W3.3 Task Worksheet: Your Impact, Personalised
- Workshop Reflections Log.

Final Activity - vCV (Visual CV)

Contains:

- vCV Task Worksheet, including guided resources and prompt questions.

Activity is designed to be self-lead, using the key lessons learnt from the workshops.

You will need your:

- Completed workshop reflections
- Your completed tasks from all 3 workshops

As we developed the participant exchange workshops this inspired the youth led development of our workshop resources linked to building the 'live CV' tool. In the last quarter of delivery we have employed a young person to review the materials & create the resource package. Mahalia worked with the programme manager, using the previous workshop plans & reports to design a resource written by her & addressed to other young people to be peer delivered.

She has created an online resource package which included an instruction book, session plans & worksheets for three workshops plus the final vCV guidance. This resources has refined the key areas identified by participants to focus on; Communication, Self-Empowerment & Impact & May finished by using the vCV guide to draft her own to share as an example.

Extract from the workshop resource *cVC worksheet*.

May's Example vCV

About Me

Volunteering had improved my identification and leadership skills. I progressed from studying seagull behaviour to learning about wetlands habitat management.

I aim to inspire all generations to know more about the green world outside their door.

I have impacted my local community by conserving our wildlife and helped the locals understand how their green spaces work- from botany to behaviour! All of this has been positive for their mental well-being, and for the continued survival of London's wildlife.

Key strengths:
1) Dedication to work 2) Experience in the field 3) Creative scientific communication.

How I used the workshop tasks:

Your Personal Branding: I wanted my brand to present myself as active and involved with the outdoors.

Your Skills: I've shown the key skills I've gotten from my studies and training that potential employers would find valuable.

Your Impact: What you've done and how it has affected others. Mine includes improving mental wellbeing and the direct conservation of habitats in London.

Remember: Yours doesn't have to look like mine! Each one of ours can look different. Use the workshop tasks as I had and let this inspire you to get started and create your own. Good luck with your vCV!